under the city manager plan, or by the mayor in cities under the federal plan.

The initiative and referendum, as provided for in general law, is applicable to each of these plans. The recall is to be applicable only in such cities as choose to adopt it. At the time of the adoption of any plan of city government provided in this law, the question of whether the recall shall be incorporated therein shall also be submitted. The recall provides for the removal of any elected officer at any election demanded by 15 per cent of the electors.

Any of the plans provided for in this law may be adopted by a municipality at an election called by 10 per cent of the voters of a municipality. The petition shall specify the form of government to be voted upon, and if the plan of adopting the specified form of government is approved by a majority of electors voting thereon, that plan shall go into effect upon the first day of January following the next regular municipal election. Any municipality which shall have operated for five years under one of the plans provided for by this law may abandon it in favor of another plan at an election called and headed as in the first instance.

Under the home rule provision of the constitution, a number of the cities of Ohio have called charter conventions to frame city charters. The first city in the State to act in this way was Cleveland, which adopted a new charter at an election held on July 1. City charter conventions are also being held in Dayton, Columbus, Akron and Youngstown. Cincinnati will vote July 30 upon the question of holding a charter convention. No cities have as yet taken steps for the adoption of any of the plans provided for in this law. It is contemplated, however, that a number of the smaller cities of the State will choose to elect one of these forms of government rather than one framed by a convention. These are admirable types of city governments to those who prefer securing new charters in this way.

S. GALE LOWRIE,
Ohio Legislative Reference Department.

Tax Legislation, 1913: Most legislatures meet biennially and sessions have been held this year in nearly all of the States. Many of the sessions were prolonged, and the important legislation is usually delayed until the end, so these notes are necessarily incomplete.

While taxation does not seem to have been as much under discussion as in 1911 (the last year when so many sessions were held), some of

the steps taken are even more significant of the present trend in taxation than those of two years ago.

The most important matters are the passage by two legislatures of constitutional amendments for home rule in taxation; by three others of amendments to get away from the general property tax; and a lower tax rate on buildings in two Pennsylvania cities.

Six legislatures passed tax amendments to their constitutions. In California a home rule amendment was passed giving counties or their subdivisions, the right to exempt any class of property from taxation for county or local purposes respectively; this would not affect taxation for State purposes, although California has now separated its sources of State and local revenue so that there is no direct State tax. This amendment is to be voted on November, 1914. Its purpose is avowedly to permit any locality by vote of the people, to exempt personal property or improvements, or both.

An amendment intended to accomplish the same purpose was submitted by initiative petition last year but lost. That amendment was so broad that it would have permitted any county or locality to establish its own tax system, methods and dates of collection, etc., and was opposed strongly on the ground that it would have led to administrative chaos. The present amendment confines the local option to a selection of property which shall be exempted from local taxation.

The Wisconsin legislature also passed an amendment granting the right of exemption to counties and localities. This, however, will have to be passed by another legislature (1915) before being submitted to the people.

The legislatures of Kansas, Oregon, and North Dakota, have all submitted amendments to their constitutions which will be voted on November, 1914, and which are intended to permit the legislatures to classify property for taxation at different rates or to grant exemptions. The present constitutions of those States require the taxation of all property by uniform rule, or what is called the general property tax.

The legislature of Ohio has submitted an amendment to be voted upon November, 1913, to exempt state and local bonds of Ohio from taxation. A similar amendment to the old constitution was adopted about eight years ago, but in the general revision by constitutional convention last year was stricken out, and bonds thereafter issued were made taxable.

In actual legislation, the most interesting step was taken by Pennsylvania, which has enacted a law providing that in second-class cities

(Pittsburgh and Scranton) the rate of taxation on buildings shall be reduced 10 per cent every three years, beginning 1914, until by the year 1925 buildings will pay only 50 per cent of the rate upon other property. In Pennsylvania personal property is classified and taxed for state purposes only, and the practical effect of this legislation will be to make the tax on land values twice the rate of the tax on improvements. This measure was advocated on the ground that it would encourage the erection of buildings, diminish congestion of population, and, by increasing the tax burden upon vacant land, increase the available building sites for homes and industry. The successive steps of reduction are taken every third year largely because the real estate assessments are triennial.

This legislation in Pennsylvania is the first positive enactment in the United States which follows the example set twenty years ago by the provinces of northwestern Canada. It may be added that the province of Saskatchewan in February, amended its rural municipality act so that, beginning with next year, all lands outside of cities will be taxed on actual value, exclusive of buildings, improvements or the expenditure of labor or capital thereon, which will be exempt. In these communities there is no personal property tax, so that local revenues will come entirely from the taxation of land values. The new law provides also for a sur-tax of 6½ cents per acre upon large holdings which have only part of their area under cultivation, and this is avowedly designed to discourage the holding of land idle for speculative purposes.

Pennsylvania enacted a tax of 2½ per cent upon the value of anthracite coal mined, one-half to go to the State and one-half to the county. This tax is expected to yield about $4,500,000, and is in addition to local real estate taxes on the coal lands, and the state tax on corporations. As this new tax does not apply to bituminous coal, of which a large tonnage is mined in Pennsylvania, it may be attacked on the ground that the law is not a proper classification as contemplated by the constitution.

Connecticut has revised its inheritance tax law so as to abolish double taxation. This follows the recommendation of the National Tax Association which was first followed by New York in 1911 and Massachusetts in 1912. Connecticut some years ago enacted a reciprocal provision to prevent the double taxation of estates of non-residents, where the State of their residence exempted residents of Connecticut under similar circumstances, so that State has not been so great an offender

against interstate comity, as a number of others, but the recent amendments put it into the front rank.

Connecticut has enacted a gross earnings tax on telephone and telegraph companies (which replaces specific taxes upon instruments and wires) and upon express and car companies.

Kansas inadvertently abolished its inheritance tax. Both direct and collateral had been taxable and it was intended to continue the latter tax. The entire law, however, was repealed and then the new collateral inheritance tax law failed to pass the senate.

The New York legislature passed an amendment providing for "excess condemnation" which will be voted on in November, 1913. It follows in general the Massachusetts amendment adopted two years ago and limits the property which the legislature can authorize a city to acquire (in addition to that necessary for a public improvement), to an adjacent area sufficient for building lots.

By an amendment to the New York City charter, buildings in course of construction on assessment day (and which have been commenced since the last assessment) are not to be assessed. Heretofore the practice has been to place a value on such buildings as "partially constructed." The change was intended to obviate the practical difficulties of such assessment and also to encourage building.

New Jersey enacted an important administrative law, providing for tax maps throughout the State. Cities and boroughs within two years, and townships within five years, must provide their assessors with adequate maps. The township maps need not be prepared by actual survey of each property but the state board of equalization is authorized to furnish outline maps of roads, etc., from the geological survey, on which property lines shall be drawn in by the assessors from descriptions in deeds or inspection. This plan is much cheaper than a survey and expected to be sufficiently accurate for the rural districts.

Ohio enacted a drastic revision of its administrative system. The elected assessors are abolished. Each county is made an assessment district; if under 65,000 population one assessor, and if over that number, two assessors (one of each party) are to be appointed by the governor for the county. There is no limit to the term, but county assessors are removable by the state tax commission with consent of the governor. County assessors may appoint assistants subject to approval of, and removal by, the tax commission. Each county is to have a board of review of three members appointed by the tax commission for three-year terms.

The commission and assessors are given power to increase personal property assessments over the return of the taxpayer and without notice to him. This great extension of power has aroused opposition, and petitions asking for a referendum on the law are being circulated.

Massachusetts has enacted an important law relating to municipal indebtedness, proposed by a joint legislative committee on municipal finance which reported this year. The act provides that all bonds hereafter issued by any city or town shall be serial, and taxes shall be levied sufficient to retire a proportionate part of the total indebtedness annually, beginning with the first year. The new law also continues what has hitherto been the practice in Massachusetts, and might well be followed by other States, in limiting the life of bonds according to the purpose to which the money is to be applied. For instance, bonds issued for emergency appropriations, abatement of nuisances, macadam paving, and sidewalks, are limited to five years; for stone or brick paving, ten years; for school houses and municipal buildings and sites, twenty years; for park lands and sewerage disposal, thirty years. Such debts may be authorized only by a vote of two-thirds of the council or other governing body, or of two-thirds of the voters in a town meeting. Boston is excepted from the act.

The same act provides also that within ninety days the council or other governing body of every city (except Boston) shall give a public hearing in regard to establishing a tax limit for that city, and after said hearing may provide by ordinance that the local taxes (exclusive of debt payments) shall not exceed a specified rate. Such a tax limit shall have the force of law until changed by the city council and such change cannot be made within one year and then only after a duly advertised public hearing and by a two-thirds vote of the council.

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Workmen's compensation: Workmen's compensation and employers' liability still continues to be a prolific source of legislation. The laws of Arizona, California, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio and Washington have already been analyzed in these columns.[1] Several States have either enacted laws on this subject or amended existing laws during the present year. It will be of interest to know that the compulsory law of the State of Washington was held constitutional by the supreme court of the State

[1] AM. POL. SCI. REV., November, 1911 and May, 1913.